

**HB 2126 - DIGEST**

(SUBSTITUTED FOR - SEE 1ST SUB)

Recognizes that it is important that dependent persons who are witnesses and victims of crime cooperate with law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies and that their assistance contributes to state and local enforcement efforts and the general effectiveness of the criminal justice system.

Finds that the state has an interest in making it possible for courts to adequately and fairly conduct cases involving dependent persons who are victims of crimes.

Declares an intent, by means of this act, to insure that all dependent persons who are victims and witnesses of crime are treated with sensitivity, courtesy, and special care and that their rights be protected by law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and judges in a manner no less vigorous than the protection afforded to other victims, witnesses, and criminal defendants.

Provides that the failure to provide notice to a dependent person of the rights enumerated in this act or the failure to provide the rights enumerated shall not result in civil liability so long as the failure was in good faith.

Declares that nothing in this act shall be construed to limit a party's ability to bring an action, including an action for damages, based on rights conferred by other state or federal law.

Provides that, whenever a dependent person, as defined in RCW 9A.42.010, is offered as a witness and the court finds that varying the form and administration of the oath would avoid confusion for the dependent person, the court may vary the oath to be more easily understood by the dependent person while still conveying the solemn and obligatory nature of the oath.